

REMARKS

The application has been amended and is believed to be in condition for allowance.

Claims 1, 4, and 8 have been amended. Claims 2-3 and 6-8 have been cancelled. The remaining claims are original.

Claim 1 has been amended to include all of the features of original claims 2 and 3. Claim 4 has been amended to be in independent form including all of the features of original claims 1 and 4. Claim 8 has been amended as to form. No new matter has been entered by way of these amendments.

Claims 1-10, 16-18, and 20 stand rejected as anticipated by ONISHI et al. 6,196,629.

There are no other formal or substantive rejections.

A child car seat defined in amended claim 1 comprises a base and a seat main body. The base is provided with a lower base portion and an upper base portion, and the upper base portion is mounted to the lower base portion so as to freely turn with respect to the lower base portion. The seat main body has a shell and the shell is connected to the upper base portion of the base via a reclining mechanism. The base is provided with a bridge which is arranged so as to be astride the shell in a lateral direction while allowing a reclining motion of the shell with respect to the upper base portion. Both ends of the bridge are fixed to the upper base portion, and a belt fixing apparatus

for fixing a seat belt of the vehicle to the base is mounted to the bridge.

According to the above configuration, the base is mounted on the seat of the vehicle by placing the seat belt on the bridge and fixing it to the bridge by using the fixing apparatus. Since both ends of the bridge are fixed to the upper base portion, the upper base portion is directly restrained on the vehicle seat. Therefore, when the impulsive force is exerted on the shell of the seat main body, that force is transmitted to the upper base portion and is received by the vehicle seat belt. Accordingly, it is possible to prevent the impact from being transmitted to a turning mechanism to be provided between the lower base portion and the upper base portion.

On the contrary, a child car seat disclosed by ONISHI et al. comprises a seat device 1A, support device 1B and a base 1C. The seat device includes a seat bottom 16 and a backrest 11. The backrest 11 is hingedly connected at the rear end side of the seat bottom 16 via a hinge member 18 in a reclinable manner. The support device 1B includes a connection plate 21, and a pair of armrests 14 and 15 which are connected via the plate 21. The support device 1B is mounted on the base 1C so as to be rotatable in a horizontal direction (see column 6, lines 10-37). The backrest 11 is attached to the support device 1B so as to be pivotable about the pin bolts 34, and the bottom plate 16 is supported by the support device 1B so as to be slidable along the

guide grooves 32 of the armrests 14 and 15. Such arrangement causes the seat bottom 16 to be gradually shifted backward along the grooves 32 as the backrest 11 pivots forward about the pin bolts 34 (see column 5, lines 47-67). Further, the connection plate 21 is rotatably mounted to the base 1C by inserting the support plate 30 into an opening 22 of the plate 21 and fixed it to the fix plate 20a provided on the base 1C (see column 7, line 61 - column 8, line 1). Furthermore, the base 1C is provided with a seat belt fixation groove 20f and the base 1C is fixed to the vehicle seat by engaging the seat belt of the vehicle with the groove 20f (see column 8, lines 3-5).

In such arrangement, it seems to us that the seat device 1A corresponds to the seat main body of the present invention and the seat bottom 16 constitutes one part of the seat main body, that is, the seat bottom 6 substantially serves as a shell together with the backrest 11. The Official Action states that the seat bottom 16 corresponds to an upper base portion. Moreover, apparently in our study described above, the seat bottom 16 is connected with the backrest 11 and slides on the support device 1B in accordance with a reclining motion of the backrest 11. Therefore, the seat bottom 16, as well as the backrest 11, is mounted on the support device 1B through a reclining mechanism, so that the seat bottom 16 does not correspond to the upper base portion of the present invention.

Further, in a child car seat defined in claim 1, the base has a bridge and both ends of the bridge are fixed to the upper base portion, thereby enabling the upper base portion to be restrained by the seat belt of the vehicle. However, in the child car seat of ONISHI et al., only the base 1C is restrained on the seat of the vehicle through the seat belt thereof, and all elements to be mounted on the base 1C are not restrained by the seat belt. Therefore, the impulsive force exerted on the seat device 1A is inevitably transmitted to the turning mechanism to be provided between the connection plate 21 and the base 1C. If the seat bottom 16 corresponds to the upper base portion of the present invention, the seat bottom 16 should have a structure for being engaged with the seat belt. However, in fact, there are no structures on the seat bottom 16 to be engaged with the seat belt of the vehicle.

In view of the above, applicant believes that amended claim 1 is not anticipated by ONISHI et al. and is in an allowable condition.

With respect to claim 4, a child car seat defined in claim 4 includes the features that the base portion is provided with a lower base portion and an upper base portion, the upper base portion is mounted on the lower base portion so as to freely turn, and the upper base portion is provided with a belt mounting portion for fixing the upper base portion to the seat of the vehicle by the seat belt of the vehicle.

Applicant again points out that the upper base portion can be restrained or fixed on the seat of the vehicle by placing the seat belt on the belt mounting portion provided on the upper base portion itself, thereby preventing the impulsive force to be transmitted into a turning mechanism to be provided between the lower and upper base portions.

Since the child car seat of ONISHI et al. has no structure to make the upper base portion to be engaged with the seat belt of the vehicle as explained in the above, applicant believes that claim 4, as well as dependent claim 5, is not anticipated by ONISHI et al., and is in an allowable condition.

With respect to claim 8, the child car seat defined in claim 8 comprises a base and a seat main body supported by the base. The seat main body is invertible in an orientation with respect to a longitudinal direction of a vehicle, and a front end of a shell provided in the seat main body is allowed to be positioned on an approximately extension of a rear end of the base, at a time of setting the seat main body to a rear-facing posture.

According to such configuration, it is possible to bring the rear end of the base and the front end of the shell into contact with the seat back of the vehicle when in the case that the seat main body is set to the rear-facing posture, thereby expanding a contact range between the seat back and the child car seat in a vertical direction without using any

additional parts. This is advantageous to improve the stability of the child car seat.

In one embodiment shown in Figure 7B, the front end (4i) of a shell (4) provided in the seat main body (3) is positioned on an approximately extension of a rear end (12) of the base (2). Accordingly, the contact range between the child car seat and the seat back (100) is extended in the vertical direction in comparison with the case that only the rear end of the base is brought into contact with the seat back.

On the contrary, the Official Action keeps silent with respect to the above features of claim 8. Also, ONISHI et al. show the rear-facing posture of the child car seat only in Figure 4, and in this figure it is not possible to become aware that the rear end of the based and the front end of the seat main body is aligned in the vertical direction. Therefore, we believe that claim 8 is not anticipated by ONISHI et al.

In addition, the feature of claim 9 is not anticipated by ONISHI et al. because the height of the armrests 14 and 15 of ONISHI et al. is gradually decreased as it goes close to the front end of the seat bottom 16. The inclination of the armrest of ONISHI et al. is opposite to that of the present invention. The inclination of the armrest defined in claim 9 is advantageous to extend the contact range between the armrest, that is front end of the shell and the seat back of the vehicle.

Regarding claim 10, in the child car seat of ONISHI et al. only the base 1C, that corresponds to the lower base portion of the present invention, is fixed to the seat of the vehicle by engaging the seat belt of the vehicle with the groove provided on the base 1C itself. There are no structures in the child seat of ONISHI et al. to engage the seat belt with the upper base portion of the base. In fact, in Figure 4 of ONISHI et al., that shows the rear-facing posture of the seat device 1A, the seat belt of the vehicle is placed below the armrest and there are no belt through holes on the armrest.

With respect to claim 16, a child car seat defined in claim 16 comprises a seat supporting portion to be clamped on a seat of a vehicle by a seat belt of the vehicle, and a belt fixing apparatus mounted to the seat supporting portion. The belt fixing apparatus allows the seat belt inserted to an inner portion thereof to move in one direction and inhibits the seat belt from moving to an opposite direction to the one direction. Further, the belt fixing apparatus is rotatably mounted to the seat supporting portion in such a manner that the one direction is invertible with respect to a lateral direction of the vehicle.

According to the child car seat defined in claim 16, it is possible to switch a corresponding relation between the lateral direction of the vehicle and the direction in which the belt fixing apparatus clamps the belt, by rotating the belt fixing apparatus. Accordingly, without reference to which of the

right and left seats the child car seat is placed on, the child car seat can be clamped to the seat of the vehicle by fixing the seat belt and the seat supporting portion using the same belt fixing apparatus.

On the contrary, in the child car seat of ONISHI et al., merely has a seat belt fixation groove 20f on the base 1C for fixing the base to the seat of the vehicle using the seat belt of the vehicle. As is apparent in Figure 2 of ONISHI et al., the seat belt fixation groove 20f merely extends laterally between both sides of the base 1C and there is no belt fixing apparatus in the groove 20f capable of inhibiting the seat belt from moving laterally. Accordingly, it is apparent that claim 16 is not anticipated by ONISHI et al., and claim 16, as well as dependent claims 17, 18 and 20, is allowable.

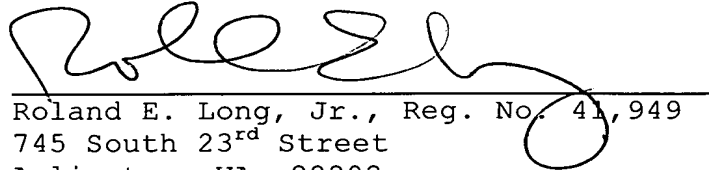
In summary, none of the independent claims are anticipated for the reasons discussed above. Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance of all the pending claims are respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any

overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional
fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

YOUNG & THOMPSON

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roland E. Long, Jr.', is written over a horizontal line.

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